

The 2019 [novel coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#) is now known as COVID-19.

Information about COVID-19 is evolving – the Newtown Health District is closely following this information to remain current about the virus, its transmission, its resulting illness, effective care for patients and limiting its spread. The Health District receives daily briefings and updates from state and federal health agencies and responds and advises accordingly.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention today has advised that additional cases of COVID-19 in the United States are likely. The coming weeks/months will reveal the extent of virus transmission and potential impact on our lives. It is critically important that residents take steps to protect themselves, those around them and help limit spread. (See note below)

Background

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV), which we experienced in 2003 and 2012.
- Common signs of infection include fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.
- No vaccine or specific treatment for COVID-19 infection is available; care is supportive.
- Public health authorities and scientists are tirelessly working to learn about the potential impacts of this new virus and how to limit its spread.

What We Are Doing

- The Newtown Health District continues its collaboration with community partners, Nuvance (Danbury and New Milford Hospitals) and neighboring towns and cities in our commitment to work together to protect our residents.
- We continue to adapt to updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and CT Department of Public Health protocols as they evolve.
- Health departments in Connecticut have been notified by the CT Dept of Public Health when their residents have returned from traveling in mainland China; those residents are assessed for risk and monitored accordingly.
- We will provide updates about COVID-19, virus transmission, containment efforts and any other developing information as it becomes available.

What You Can Do

Individuals who are experiencing symptoms and may have traveled to areas of concern (mainland China, other areas will likely be added) or have been in contact with somebody who has traveled to this area should call ahead to their healthcare provider before presenting for treatment.

TAKE NOTE: While there is currently no vaccine for COVID-19, everyday preventative actions can help stop the spread of this and other respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Stay Informed

Helpful Reference Information:

- [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- www.newtownbee.com